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Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions Questionnaire Pilot Study

Jenna Elizabeth Thompson

University of Windsor, thomp124@uwindsor.ca

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Brief Summary: Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions
Questionnaire Pilot Study

Student Researcher: Jenna Thompson

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Julie Hakim-Larson

The goal of this study was to begin to validate the newly developed measure “Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions” (PFI; Thompson, 2020) for use in a second study as part of my dissertation. I hypothesized that this measure will assess two distinct but related constructs; the influence of parent approval/disapproval and the influence of friend approval/disapproval. Additionally, I hypothesized that, the measure would be associated with theoretically relevant constructs (e.g., measure of attitudes towards parental influence on romantic relationships, interdependent self-construal).

Two-hundred and fifty people who were unmarried and were 18-39 years old were recruited to participate in this study through the psychology department participant pool. After the data were cleaned, 231 participants remained. Given missing data on the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2020), responses for this measure were imputed using estimation maximization as suggested by Fox-Wasylyshyn and El-Masri (2005).

Factor analysis was carried out with the PFI. The results of the Principal Component Factor Analysis are outlined in Table 1. Unlike the initially hypothesized two factor solution (i.e., Parent Approval/Disapproval Importance, Friend Approval/Disapproval Importance) a two factor solution was found to best fit the data.

The four factors were labeled as follows: Parent Disapproval Importance, Friend Disapproval Importance, Parent/Friend Approval Importance for Serious Relationships, and Parent/Friend Approval Importance for Casual Relationships. Factor 1, labeled “Parent Disapproval Importance”, includes questions about how the participant would respond to parent disapproval in various stages of a romantic relationship. Similarly, Factor 2, labeled “Friend Disapproval Importance”, includes questions about how the participant would respond to friend

disapproval in various stages of a romantic relationship. Factor 3, labeled “Parent/Friend Approval Importance for Serious Relationships”, includes questions about how the participant would respond to parent or friend approval in various stages of a serious romantic relationship (i.e., beginning or continuing to date regularly, marrying). Factor 4, labeled “Parent/Friend Approval Importance for Casual Relationships”, includes questions about how the participant would respond to parent or friend approval in various stages of a potential romantic relationship (i.e., spending time together informally, going on a single date).

All scales were computed and bivariate correlations between the PFI and other measures were computed; these are reported in Table 2. As hypothesized, several of the statistically significant correlations are in the direction hypothesized in relation to theoretically related concepts providing support for the validity of the measure). Generally, these correlations provide some support for the validity of measure. As anticipated, the two PFI subscales accounting for the importance of parent and friend approval are positively correlated with interpersonal dependency meaning that people who tend to rely more on opinions and support of other people also tend to be more influenced in their behaviour in romantic relationships by the approval of their parents and friends. Additionally, all measures involving the influence of parent approval or disapproval on romantic relationships are correlated with the measure of attitudes towards parental control of romantic relationships. Three out of four parent and friend approval and disapproval scales were correlated with the measure of interdependence indicating that people who have a more interdependent self-construal care more about the approval and disapproval of their parents and friends over their romantic relationships. Finally, as anticipated, the Importance of Friend and Parent Approval of Casual Relationships was negatively correlated with independence, meaning people who are more independent put less importance in the opinion of

parents and friends when considering casual romantic relationships. Although these correlations do provide support for the utility of the PFI, not all measures anticipated to be correlated with the PFI were found to be related. Additionally, interpersonal dependency was negatively correlated with the Importance of Friend Disapproval scale, in contrast to what was hypothesized.

As expected, Study 1 results contributed to the development of a measure of parent and friend approval and disapproval that was associated with theoretically related constructs. In contrast to hypothesized, this measure was best explained with four scales rather than two scales. Going forward for Study 2 of my dissertation, rather than the two originally intended parent and friend approval/disapproval measures, the four scales will be used as outcome variable to measure the importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval on romantic relationships.

References

Fox-Wasylyshyn, S. M., & El-Masri, M. M. (2005). Handling missing data in self-report measures. *Research in nursing & health*, 28(6), 488-495.

Table 1

Results From a Factor Analysis of the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI) questionnaire

PFI Items	Factor Loading			
	1	2	3	4
Factor 1: Parent Disapproval Importance				
1. Spend time casually with a potential romantic partner who you really like but whom your parents would disapprove:	.86	.42	-.05	-.12
2. Go on a single date with someone who you really like but your parents would disapprove:	.79	.39	.05	-.33
3. Begin regularly dating someone who you really like but whom your parents disapprove:	.93	.43	-.04	-.07
4. Continue dating/seeing someone who you really like but whom your parents disapprove:	.93	.35	-.07	.02
5. Marry someone who you really like, but whom your parents disapprove:	.84	.32	-.13	.10
Factor 2: Friend Disapproval Importance				
11. Spend time casually with a potential romantic partner who you really like, but whom your friends would disapprove:	.36	.86	.04	-.17
12. Go on a single date with someone who you really like, but whom your friends would disapprove:	.34	.83	.13	-.22
13. Begin regularly dating someone who you really like, but whom your friends disapprove:	.38	.92	-.02	.01
14. Continue dating/seeing someone who you really like, but whom your friends have expressed disapproval:	.43	.88	-.04	.13
15. Marry someone who you really like, but whom your friends disapprove:	.37	.83	-.12	.20
Factor 3: Parent/Friend Approval Importance for Serious Relationships				
8. Begin regularly dating someone who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your parents strongly approve:	.00	-.11	.80	.50
9. Continue dating/seeing someone who do not feel strongly about, but whom your parents strongly approve:	.02	-.12	.86	.44
10. Marry someone you do not feel strongly about, but whom your parents strongly approve:	-.08	-.01	.80	.19
18. Begin regularly dating someone who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends strongly approve:	-.10	.09	.76	.66
19. Continue dating/seeing someone who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends strongly approve:	-.08	.06	.81	.61

20. Marry someone you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends have expressed strong approval:	-.13	.07	.74	.20
Factor 4: Parent/Friend Approval Importance for Casual Relationships				
16. Spend time casually with a potential romantic partner who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends would strongly approve:	-.09	.09	.34	.84
17. Go on a single date with someone who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends strongly approve:	-.14	.02	.32	.86
6. Spend time casually with a potential romantic partner who you do not feel strongly about but whom your parents would strongly approve:	-.06	-.09	.41	.64
7. Go on a single date with someone who you do not feel strongly about, but your parents would strongly approve:	.08	-.11	.32	.76

Note. $N=231$. Promax rotation with Kaiser Normalization was used as the extraction method.

Table 2

Correlations for Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. Importance of Parent Disapproval	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Importance of Friend Disapproval	.460**	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Importance Parent and Friend Approval of Strong Relationships	-.068	.005	-	-	-	-	-
4. Importance of Parent and Friend Approval of Casual Relationships	-.092	-.008	.581**	-	-	-	-
5. Interpersonal Dependency Inventory	-.097	-.235**	.325**	.228**	-	-	-
6. Parental Influence on Mate Choice	.338**	.102	.328**	.178**	.176**	-	-
7. SSCS Interdependent	.185**	.066	.218**	.203**	.209**	.191**	-
8.SSCS Independent	.110	.022	-.121	-.197**	-.258**	.085	.009

Note: N=231. Statistical significance for two-tailed correlations.